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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
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09/980,092

02/11/2002

Jan Abraham Van Asselt

VANASSETL.NEW1

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07/02/2004

BLANK ROME LLP

THE FARRAGUT BUILDING SUITE 1000

900 17TH STREET NW

WASHINGTON, DC 20006

EXAMINER

HUNTER, ALVIN A

ART UNIT

PAPER NUMBER

3711

DATE MAILED: 07/02/2004

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

RECEIVED

JUL 21 2004

TECHNOLOGY CENTER R3700

**Office Action Summary**

Application No.

09/980,092

Applicant(s)

VAN ASSELT, JAN ABRAHAM

Examiner

Alvin A. Hunter

Art Unit

3711

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --  
Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

**Status**

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 10 February 2004.  
2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.  
3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

**Disposition of Claims**

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 15-28 is/are pending in the application.  
4a) Of the above claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are withdrawn from consideration.  
5) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are allowed.  
6) ☒ Claim(s) 15-28 is/are rejected.  
7) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are objected to.  
8) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

**Application Papers**

- 9) ☒ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.  
10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on \_\_\_\_\_ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.  
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).  
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).  
11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

**Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119**

- 12) ☒ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).  
a) ☒ All b) ☐ Some \* c) ☐ None of:  
1. ☒ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.  
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. \_\_\_\_\_.  
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

\* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

**Attachment(s)**

- 1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)  
2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)  
3) ☐ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)  
Paper No(s)/Mail Date \_\_\_\_\_.  
4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413)  
Paper No(s)/Mail Date \_\_\_\_\_.  
5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)  
6) ☐ Other: \_\_\_\_\_

### **DETAILED ACTION**

Applicant's request for reconsideration of the finality of the rejection of the last Office action is persuasive and, therefore, the finality of that action is withdrawn.

#### ***Specification***

The specification is objected to as failing to provide proper antecedent basis for the claimed subject matter. See 37 CFR 1.75(d)(1) and MPEP § 608.01(o). Correction of the following is required: the term runner within claim 25 lacks antecedent basis within the specification.

#### ***Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 112***

The following is a quotation of the first paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112:

The specification shall contain a written description of the invention, and of the manner and process of making and using it, in such full, clear, concise, and exact terms as to enable any person skilled in the art to which it pertains, or with which it is most nearly connected, to make and use the same and shall set forth the best mode contemplated by the inventor of carrying out his invention.

Claim 25 rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, first paragraph, because the specification, while being enabling for a plastic track, does not reasonably provide enablement for a runner. The specification does not enable any person skilled in the art to which it pertains, or with which it is most nearly connected, to make the invention commensurate in scope with these claims. Applicant does not disclose within the specification what constitutes a runner.

The following is a quotation of the second paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112:

The specification shall conclude with one or more claims particularly pointing out and distinctly claiming the subject matter which the applicant regards as his invention.

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Claim 25 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention.

Applicant does not disclose within the specification what constitutes a runner. For examination purposes, a runner will be interpreted as being what the applicant claims as a slide.

### ***Double Patenting***

The nonstatutory double patenting rejection is based on a judicially created doctrine grounded in public policy (a policy reflected in the statute) so as to prevent the unjustified or improper timewise extension of the "right to exclude" granted by a patent and to prevent possible harassment by multiple assignees. See *In re Goodman*, 11 F.3d 1046, 29 USPQ2d 2010 (Fed. Cir. 1993); *In re Longi*, 759 F.2d 887, 225 USPQ 645 (Fed. Cir. 1985); *In re Van Ornum*, 686 F.2d 937, 214 USPQ 761 (CCPA 1982); *In re Vogel*, 422 F.2d 438, 164 USPQ 619 (CCPA 1970); and, *In re Thorington*, 418 F.2d 528, 163 USPQ 644 (CCPA 1969).

A timely filed terminal disclaimer in compliance with 37 CFR 1.321(c) may be used to overcome an actual or provisional rejection based on a nonstatutory double patenting ground provided the conflicting application or patent is shown to be commonly owned with this application. See 37 CFR 1.130(b).

Effective January 1, 1994, a registered attorney or agent of record may sign a terminal disclaimer. A terminal disclaimer signed by the assignee must fully comply with 37 CFR 3.73(b).

Claims 15, 16, 18, 20, 21, 24, 25, 26, and 27, 28, are provisionally rejected under the judicially created doctrine of obviousness-type double patenting as being unpatentable over claims 1, 2, 4, 6, 7, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, and 17 of copending Application No. 10/416818. Although the conflicting claims are not identical, they are not patentably distinct from each other because Application No. 10/416818 claims the same subject matter but the instant application does not claim the ball returning to its

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starting position. Though the instant application does not disclose the above

Application No. 10//416818 anticipates the instant application.

This is a provisional obviousness-type double patenting rejection because the conflicting claims have not in fact been patented.

Claims 17-19 are provisionally rejected under the judicially created doctrine of obviousness-type double patenting as being unpatentable over claims 1, 2, 4, 6, 7, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, and 17 of copending Application No. 10/416818 in view of Gilbey-Thompson (GB 201645).

In regards to claim 17, Application No. 10/416818 does not claim the anchorage being stakes. Gilbey-Thompson discloses a golf practicing device wherein the device is anchored to the ground by stakes (See Page 1, lines 62 through 71). One having ordinary skill in the art would have found it obvious to use a stake, as taught by Gilbey-Thompson, in order to anchor the device to the ground.

In regards to claim 18, Application No. 10416818 claims the other end of the guideways attached to a stable support (See claim 12).

In regards to claim 19, Application No. 10/416818 does not claim a means for varying the length. Gilbey-Thompson discloses a golf practicing device wherein the length of the device is varied wherein the length is inherently base upon the positioning of anchors and stable supports (See Page 2, lines 70 through 73 and the Drawings). One having ordinary skill in the art would have found it obvious to have a means for varying the length, as taught by Gilbey-Thompson, in order to accommodate for variable playing spaces.

This is a provisional obviousness-type double patenting rejection.

Claims 22 and 23 are provisionally rejected under the judicially created doctrine of obviousness-type double patenting as being unpatentable over claims 1, 2, 4, 6, 7, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, and 17 of copending Application No. 10/416818 in view of Agardi (USPN 5027958).

In regards to claims 22 and 23, Application No. 10/416818 does not disclose the guideways made of a low friction material. Agardi discloses a clothesline made of a plastic covered cord (See Column 2, lines 22 through 33). One having ordinary skill in the art would have found it obvious to incorporate a plastic covered cord, as taught by, Agardi, in order to make the guideways weather resistant. It is also submitted that the cord is low fractioned because it is made of a plastic covered cord.

This is a provisional obviousness-type double patenting rejection.

### ***Response to Arguments***

Applicant's arguments with respect to claims 15-28 have been considered but are moot in view of the new ground(s) of rejection.

Applicant is reminded of his/her duty to disclose all relevant material to the instant application, including ALL copending applications.

### ***Conclusion***

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Alvin A. Hunter whose telephone number is 703-306-

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5693. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday through Friday from 7:30AM to 4:00PM Eastern Time.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Gregory Vidovich, can be reached on 703-308-1513. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 703-872-9306.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

AAW

Alvin A. Hunter, Jr.

  
GREGORY VIDOVICH  
SUPERVISORY PATENT EXAMINER  
TECHNOLOGY CENTER 3700

**Notice of References Cited**Application/Control No.  
09/980,092Applicant(s)/Patent Under  
Reexamination  
VAN ASSELT, JAN ABRAHAMExaminer  
Alvin A. HunterArt Unit  
3711

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**U.S. PATENT DOCUMENTS**

*		Document Number Country Code-Number-Kind Code	Date MM-YYYY	Name	Classification
	A	US-5,027,958	07-1991	Agardi, Paul	211/119.1
	B	US-			
	C	US-			
	D	US-			
	E	US-			
	F	US-			
	G	US-			
	H	US-			
	I	US-			
	J	US-			
	K	US-			
	L	US-			
	M	US-			

**FOREIGN PATENT DOCUMENTS**

*		Document Number Country Code-Number-Kind Code	Date MM-YYYY	Country	Name	Classification
	N					
	O					
	P					
	Q					
	R					
	S					
	T					

**NON-PATENT DOCUMENTS**

*		Include as applicable: Author, Title Date, Publisher, Edition or Volume, Pertinent Pages)
	U	
	V	
	W	
	X	

\*A copy of this reference is not being furnished with this Office action. (See MPEP § 707.05(a).)  
Dates in MM-YYYY format are publication dates. Classifications may be US or foreign.



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## Schedule

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July 2004	TCs 3600 and 3700
August 2004	TCs 2100 and 2600

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